

ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Minute of the meeting held on 25 October 2018.

Present: Mr J Dunphy (Convener), Dr M Bailey, Ms L Binnie, Ms M Buchan, Ms K Cross, Dr M Goua, Dr S Henderson, Mr A Johnston, Dr R McGregor, Mr R McGregor, Ms A Murray, Dr F Work and Dr M Zarb.

Apologies: Ms G Bugeag, Ms L Gibbons-Wood, Dr K Martzoukou, Mr S McGuire, Ms J Nicol, Ms Z Olatunji, Mr T Rashid, Ms F Roberts, Mrs A Smart, Mrs J Strachan, Ms J Tait, Mr D Vila Domini and Ms D Wynne.

In Attendance: Ms L Ginsberg (Secretary) and Ms C Sim (for item 4.1).

1. **WELCOME**

The Convener welcomed staff to the first meeting of the Session and congratulated colleagues in a number of areas:

- Mrs Julie Strachan had been appointed as the new Head of Learning and Teaching Development within DELTA.
- The first round of recruiting Teaching Excellence Fellows (TEFs) had seen four staff appointed; Dr Fiona Work, Dr Konstantina Martzoukou, Ms Fiona Roberts and Ms Donna Wynne. The next round would be in 2019.
- Mrs Elizabeth Hancock had been appointed as the new Vice-Principal for Academic Development and Student Experience.
- Multiple colleagues had become a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy; Mr Theo Dounas, Ms Toni Gibson, Ms Margaret Buchan, Dr Katherine Burgess, Dr Ghazi Droubi, Dr Elimma Ezeani, Dr Sarah Henderson, Ms Julie Jones, Mr Thorsten Lauterbach, Dr Leon Moller, Mr Iain Morrison, Ms Olobunmi Okhuoua, Dr Gbenga Oluyemi, Mr Jonathan Scott, Mr Mike Shepherd, Dr Fiona Smith, Ms Lindsey Stewart and Ms Donna Wynne. It was agreed that future successful applications would be noted at each meeting of the Sub-Committee.

Action

Secretary

2. **REMIT AND COMPOSITION**

An extract from *Organisational Regulation* O4 concerning the remit and composition and the current Membership List of the Sub-Committee were noted, along with the following points:

- Mrs Julie Strachan and Ms Margaret Buchan had been added as Ex Officio members.
- TEFs had been added as In Attendance members.
- Mr Robin McGregor's job title had been updated.
- Five academic representatives had agreed to extend their term of office until 2020 to ensure continuity of members rather than have everyone finish at the same time.
- It was agreed that Mrs Veronica Strachan and Mrs Elizabeth Hancock's job titles would be updated.

Secretary

Mrs Julie Strachan had been approached and agreed to serve as Vice-Convener for Session 2018-19. The Convener wished to convey thanks to Ms Karen Cross for serving as Vice-Convener in the previous Session.

3. **MINUTE AND MATTERS ARISING**

The Minute of the meeting held on 24 April 2018 [reference TLASC/18/3] was approved.

The following matters arising were considered.

3.1 **Pedagogy in eLearning Discussion [TLASC/18/3/1.2]**

Ms Laura Binnie and Mrs Julie Strachan had met and raised a list of helpful points for consideration. In terms of ensuring good ongoing links, it was noted that Mrs Julie Strachan would attend future meetings organised by the eLearning Advisers.

3.2 **Academic Honesty Working Group**

The work undertaken by the Working Group was noted in the Matters Arising Report. [Refer item 4.3 below].

3.3 **Personal Tutor System**

It was noted that an updated Personal Tutor Policy had been approved by Academic Council. The planned work in relation to the Personal Tutor System, whereby School Academic Boards (SABs) would be expected to report on the effectiveness of their system, was noted in the Matters Arising Report. This work was being overseen by the Learning Infrastructure Sub-Committee.

4. **INSTITUTIONAL ENHANCEMENT WORK**

4.1 **Priority Projects**

The Sub-Committee received a copy of its report to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) on Institutional Learning and Teaching Enhancement Projects. The close out report had given QAEC members a summary of the scale of work undertaken. It was considered to be well received and a good opportunity to present the efforts from staff across the University.

In terms of progress to date, members considered an update report for the Institutional Learning and Teaching Enhancement Projects, and Ms Casey Sim, Assistant Project Officer in DELTA, attended for this item.

4.1.1 ***Project 1: Online Submission, Marking and Return of Coursework***

Members noted and discussed:

- The volume of online submission with over 125,000 CampusMoodle submissions and 86,000 Turnitin Feedback Studio returns.
- A survey of Course Leaders was conducted to measure progress of the project.
- The recent Student Experience Questionnaire (SEQ) recorded a 5% increase in University-wide Assessment and Feedback satisfaction, which was the biggest improvement delivered to date.
- The project was on track and Year 2 work had been identified and started.
- The impact on equipment requirements and how to ensure equitable treatment amongst all staff. Members were encouraged to hear a new process had been developed by the Project Team and that the Major Projects Group (MPG) had made an investment to address these issues.
- The different marking practices within Schools, which were potentially further limited by software, and the importance of getting staff together to discuss disparities. It was noted the Project Team would plan an event for Schools, which would provide an opportunity to discuss this and related points.
- The "federated rollout" approach was positively received and allowed for ambitious and clear goal setting whilst giving Schools the ability to make their own changes. It was suggested the approach could be useful for all University-wide projects.

4.1.2 **Project 2: Enhancement of the Online Learning Experience**

Members noted and discussed:

- The publication of the Baseline and Baseline+, which had been well received.
- The outcomes of an audit of online learning courses, which had resulted in 13 live courses being identified as a priority for enhancement work. This had been overseen by the Academic Development Committee (ADC).
- All participating courses had seen enhancements executed well since the start of the project.
- It was recognised that Session 2017/18 enhancement work had focussed on the above courses and that there was an opportunity to share learning more widely. DELTA would arrange a session for this purpose.

Ms J Nicol

4.1.3 **Project 3: Lecture Capture**

Members noted and discussed:

- Lecture capture use had expanded as previously reported.
- Reflecting on positive feedback from students and staff, MPG had approved a further investment in the technology. This would address feedback from staff, including rolling out the service in the Ishbel Gordon Building.
- In addition, it was noted that DELTA intended to commence a pilot of Lynda.com, an online learning portal, with staff. This would support implementation of the Baseline and further details would be available soon.

Overall, members agreed the Step Change Team was supportive throughout the projects, notably by being flexible, offering help with solutions and easing staff through transitional periods, of which the Convener thanked the team for their work.

4.2 **IT Services Planned Enhancements and Priorities**

The Convener intimated that an invitation to IT Services (ITS) had been extended to present to the Sub-Committee on recent and planned work. Unfortunately, IT Services (ITS) were unavailable to attend to present.

Members stressed their desire to learn about and contribute to development plans in IT. There was a sense that this conversation could, at times, be improved.

It was agreed IT would be requested to hold a briefing for members in advance of the next meeting.

Ms K Walsh/
Mr J-P
Cleary

4.3 **Academic Honesty Materials**

Ms Margaret Buchan presented the new Academic Honesty pages on CampusMoodle. It was agreed the link would be provided with the Minute.

Secretary

Secretary's Note:

The Academic Honesty link presented was as follows:
<http://campusmoodle.rgu.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=76611>.

Members noted and discussed:

- The development was welcomed and significantly updated guidance in this space.
- It was suggested that visibility, for both staff and students, would be of central importance. It was agreed briefing notes would be sent out.
- Specific visibility was suggested in regards to the pages being an immediate tab on the CampusMoodle homepage and whether it was possible to link to the pages from each module on the platform.

Ms M
Buchan

The Convener thanked Ms Margaret Buchan and Dr Rachel McGregor for their work on the developments.

5. **LEARNING AND TEACHING FUTURES**

5.1 **Online Learning Update**

The Convener provided an oral update to members on online learning, notably that online learning, and the quality of the University's portfolio, would be of critical importance going forward. As part of this it had been agreed to remove the term 'distance' from the University's materials as it was recognised online learning was broader than location.

In taking this forward, the Convener identified two potential strands of work:

1. **RGU Pedagogy Statement:**
It was recognised that pedagogy should drive our development and in this respect, that it would be helpful to articulate the University's approach to pedagogy.
2. **Review of the University's digital estate:**
As our physical estate was a key asset, the digital learning and teaching estate was critical to achievement of our pedagogy. This was important considering that two out of five students learnt online and five out of five students used the digital estate. Setting out ambitions for the development of the digital estate by listening to and engaging our community would be important.

In both of these, and other areas, there would be opportunities for members to engage.

The theme for the Student-Facing Support Services Review on delivery and design of support services for off-campus students was noted, and it was agreed an update on this would be requested from Mr Filippo Antoniazzi.

**Secretary/
Mr F
Antoniazzi**

Furthermore, members were asked to consider the University's key strengths in relation to online learning and suggested:

- High satisfaction rates; online learners were consistently more satisfied than on-campus learners.
- Good responsiveness of staff.
- Availability of interactive and innovative materials.
- The use of technology to replicate the campus environment, which ensured equitable experiences.
- Employment of eTutors; people from industry that supported students online, provided materials, marked assessments and were a formal member of the Module Team. It was agreed that the development of eTutors would be explored further to scope what was required.
- Enthusiastic and committed online Course Teams, which highlighted the opportunity to share best practice.
- Ability to have control over creative solutions.
- High levels of flexibility as online learning was transactional in nature.

**Dr R
McGregor**

5.2 **Learning and Teaching Conference**

The Learning and Teaching Conference 2019 was noted as an upcoming event, with opportunities for staff to both engage and act as reviewers of submissions. It was agreed a further update would be provided at the next meeting.

**Mrs J
Strachan**

6. QUALITY ENHANCEMENT THEME

6.1 End of Year 1 Report

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting so Ms Kirsty Campbell could attend in person. In the interim, it was agreed to organise an informal workshop to bring staff together to discuss the theme in more detail.

Holding File

**Secretary/
Ms K
Campbell**

6.2 Planned Activity for Year 2 Report

The planned internal activity focussed on three key areas; Supporting our Course Leaders, Development of 'Borderless Learning' and Understanding the Graduate Apprentice student experience.

Members enquired about project funding and it was noted there would be a small grant scheme. It was agreed interest from academic staff could be discussed with Ms Kirsty Campbell at the informal workshop.

Members

7. ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

The Sub-Committee considered an issue, which had been referred from the Academic Regulations Sub-Committee (ARSC), regarding legibility of examination scripts.

Members discussed the feedback provided by ARSC and agreed that this could, at times, be a challenging issue.

Members agreed that the University's Regulations in this area were clear and helpful. It was suggested that Student Handbooks could contain reference to the importance of assessment legibility and this could be incorporated into the Student Handbooks Guidance: Minimum Composition.

Secretary

ITEMS FOR NOTING

1. ASSESSMENT POLICY

The minor revision to the Assessment Policy in relation to access to examination scripts, approved by Convener's Action, was noted.

It brought up the issue of discrepancies between the Assessment Policy and the Assessment Guidance. It was agreed that a cross-checking exercise would be undertaken to review the information between the two documents, and the outcome of this would be brought to the next meeting. Members were encouraged to review the documents and to contact the Secretary with any queries or comments to feed into the review.

Secretary

Members

Secretary's Note:

The Assessment Policy was available at:
www.rgu.ac.uk/AssessmentPolicy.

The Assessment Guidance was available at:
<http://campusmoodle.rgu.ac.uk/mod/page/view.php?id=2939371>.

2. DELTA STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The 2018-19 Semester 1 brochure was noted.

Dr Rachel McGregor reported that there had been good engagement with the offerings, which saw 200 staff attending previously.

Following experience in year one, the opportunities had been developed into two strands:

1. Enhance with – for new colleagues.
2. Transform – for advanced practitioners.

3. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The dates and times for the next meetings were noted as follows:

- Tuesday 29 January 2019 at 9.00am in H230, Ishbel Gordon Building.
- Friday 26 April 2019 at 9.00am in H230, Ishbel Gordon Building.

As part of the Sub-Committee's role to share effective practice in teaching and learning, it was agreed it would be constructive to hear examples of this on a School/individual level.

It was agreed a "10 minute spotlight" on effective practice would be incorporated into future meetings. Members were asked to identify and approach colleagues to invite to the Sub-Committee. The January meeting would have two spotlight slots available.

Members

Mr J Dunphy, C
26 November 2018